



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Issue 124 – September 5, 2006

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

On the fifth anniversary of September 11, an event that threatened our nation and the travel industry, I am proud to be in Washington, D.C. alongside other industry leaders to show the world that the travel industry has not been broken and we are thriving today as one of the most powerful economic engines in the U.S. I am joined by several of my colleagues throughout the state, including Karen Churchard from the Arizona Tourism Alliance, Debbie Johnson from the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association and Steve Chucri from the Arizona Restaurant & Hospitality Association, for the Travel Leadership Summit, a unique, high profile opportunity for contact between travel industry leaders and Congressional delegations in Washington, DC. Arizona is just one of 35 delegations descending upon the nation's capital with a common goal of unifying the travel industry, influencing policy and achieving legislative outcomes that are favorable to travel and tourism. While in Washington, D.C., we will meet with Arizona's congressional delegation to reinforce the economic impact of the Arizona travel industry and discuss national travel issues that affect our state, such as immigration reform, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative and federal funding for national parks. While Sept. 11 will always be remembered as a dark day in American history, we hope that the Travel Leadership Summit will bring light to the fact that travel is a freedom that cannot be taken away and the U.S. is a resilient and amazing destination.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Welcomes New Advertising Manager

Troy Thompson has joined AOT's Advertising and Fulfillment Division as the new Advertising Manager. Troy recently relocated from Daytona, FL where he was working for the International Speedway Corporation as Manager of Production for the Interactive Department. In this position he managed the advertising and promotion of Interactive Brands. As a graduate of the University of Central Florida and a lifelong Florida resident, Troy is now calling Arizona home. As AOT's Advertising Manager, he will oversee the in-state and regional marketing programs, facilitate AOT's sponsorships and work with the AOT staff to position Arizona as a premier travel destination. Troy can be reached at tthompson@azot.gov or 602-364-3699.

AOT Presents "Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona" Workshop Series

Please mark your calendars for AOT's newest workshop series, featuring information from the first full-scale "Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona" report. The economic impact workshops will be held at five locations throughout the state, with each presentation being tailored to the counties that are near that location. The Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona report features county level travel data on each of Arizona's 15 counties, which will give communities invaluable information on the amount of spending and number of jobs tied to the travel industry in their area. This type of data is vital for communities to explain the value of the travel industry to key stakeholders and secure funding for tourism programs. The workshops will focus on providing communities with methods for using the valuable information in the report to achieve their objectives. Please see below workshop schedule for which counties will be reported at which workshop. To register for a workshop please contact Sarah Martins at smartins@azot.gov or by phone at 602-364-3687.

September 27, 2006

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Hampton Inn

245 London Bridge Road

Lake Havasu City, AZ, 86403

Counties to be covered: Mohave, La Paz, and Yuma

October 18, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Best Western Payson Inn

801 North Beeline Highway 87

Payson, Arizona 85547

Counties to be covered: Yavapai, Gila, Graham and Greenlee

October 20, 2006

1 p.m. – 3p.m.

Little America

2515 East Butler Avenue

Flagstaff, AZ

Counties to be covered: Coconino, Navajo and Apache

November 1, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf and Tennis Resort

10000 North Oracle Road

Tucson, AZ 85737

Counties to be covered: Pima, Cochise and Santa Cruz

November 8, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs

1111 North 7th Street

Phoenix AZ 85020

Counties to be covered: Maricopa and Pinal

Trippin' with AOT

Brochure Distribution Opportunity

In October 2006, AOT's German representative will attend the Travel Trade Workshop in Montreux, Switzerland. In attendance are approximately 4,000 Swiss travel agents, all leading Swiss tour operators and international airlines. Arizona will have an individual booth at this year's event which is being held October 26th -27th. Brochure distribution is available at a cost of \$200 plus shipping. For more information, please contact Kristy McKinnon at: kmckinnon@azot.gov or on (602) 364-3696

Arizona joins WestJet Once Again to Woo Travel Agents

In response to WestJet's announcement of new and enhanced air service to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport this fall, Arizona tourism partners and WestJet set out to let Canadian travel agents know of all that is new in our fabulous destination. The Arizona Office of Tourism as well as representatives from the Chandler, Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe and Tucson CVBs joined sales and marketing representatives from WestJet in Edmonton and Winnipeg last week to visit key travel offices and host evening agent events. The effort came about when WestJet announced it will introduce new Edmonton-Phoenix service beginning October 29th. The new seasonal service will be four times weekly. WestJet will also expand their seasonal Winnipeg-Phoenix service from 2 times weekly to 3 times weekly beginning in October as well. The Arizona and WestJet delegation hosted travel agent events in both cities which featured trade shows, product and service presentations and prize draws including several fabulous trips to Arizona. Edmonton agents were treated to a surprise visit at the event from WestJet co-founder Don Bell who spoke to the group and signed copies of his book that several of the agents had won that evening. Two years ago, WestJet launched seasonal air service from Calgary with 3 flights per week, quickly increasing to 4 flights per week. Last year Calgary service was daily between October and March and new service was introduced from Winnipeg 2 times weekly. This year, WestJet also launched vacation packages on WestJetvacations.com featuring Arizona product. This is the third year for the Arizona and WestJet marketing partnership. For more

information about this event, please contact Jennifer Sutcliffe at jsutcliffe@azot.gov or 602-364-3693.

Oh Canada! Brochure Distribution Opportunity

The Arizona Office of Tourism is participating in the Addison Travel Trade Shows. These major Canadian shows have a good following and attract many travel agents and other travel trade members each year. Exhibitors include travel suppliers from destinations, hoteliers, attractions, airlines and tour operators. Addison anticipates an overall attendance for this series to be approximately 400. AOT is offering an opportunity for your literature to be distributed at the Addison Travel Trade Shows held on October 24-26, 2006 in Winnipeg, Regina, and Saskatoon, Canada. Space will be limited to four partners on a first come first serve basis. For more information please contact Kristy McKinnon at kmckinnon@azot.gov or 602-364-3696.

Industry News

China's Latest Export: Tourists--And Lots of Them

Chinese tourists are flocking in record numbers to Trafalgar Square in London, the Great Pyramid in Giza, Egypt, and Disneyland in Hong Kong. So great is their wanderlust that China will soon become the fourth-biggest nation of globe-trotters. The explosion in foreign travel by a nation of 1.3 billion people--now freed of some government restrictions on travel and enjoying rising incomes--has the world's tourism industry seeing dollars, pounds and euros. "The potential is, for all practical purposes, unlimited," said Bruce Bommarito, director of the Nevada Commission on Tourism, which has established an office in Beijing to lure Chinese tourists. (Page 12A, USA Today)

TTAB Report: Lost Market Share Has Cost U.S. \$286 Billion

The U.S. economy has lost \$286 billion in potential GDP growth--and the creation of millions of jobs--since 1992 as its share of the international tourism market has fallen sharply, according to a new report from the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board. The report, "Restoring America's Travel Brand: A National Strategy to Compete for International Visitors," was released Tuesday by the TTAB and the Commerce Department. The U.S. share of the global international travel market has fallen 35% since 1992, from 9.4% that year to 6.1% now, says the TTAB. "Had the U.S. maintained its share of the world travel market, 27 million more travelers would have visited the U.S. in 2005," the report says. The TTAB called for a series of policy changes to improve the entry process for foreign visitors, including expanding the present Visa Waiver Program and reducing the disruption posed by the current implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative. The U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, which consists of 14 CEOs from many of the nation's most prominent travel business and organizations, advises the Department of Commerce on policy matters related to tourism. (Special to TA; Public Diplomacy Watch.com)

*Travel industry leaders endorsed the advisory report released Tuesday as a "wake up call" that emphasizes the need for a wide range of strategies for welcoming more international visitors, including using travel as a key resource in the nation's public diplomacy efforts and establishing a coordinated international marketing campaign. "This report should establish our national travel and tourism policy," said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the Travel Industry Association.

Jonathan Tisch, chairman and CEO of Loews Hotels, chairman of the Travel Business Roundtable and a member of the TTAB, noted that travel and tourism is at the heart of America's economic and national security. "Every one percent of world market share that the U.S. gains will also result in \$13.4 billion in additional revenues, 153,000 additional U.S. jobs and \$2 billion in additional tax revenues," Tisch said. (Special to TA: ModernAgent.com)

Arizona Ranks No. 2 for Job Growth

Arizona held the No. 2 spot for job growth among states in July behind Nevada, according to the Blue Chip Job Growth Update released Tuesday. The number of jobs increased to 2.58 million in July compared with 2.47 million in July 2005, when Arizona also ranked second. That's a 4.75 percent increase, significantly higher than the national rise of 1.3 percent. Arizona ranked No. 1 in two categories of job growth: trade with a 5.37 percent gain and leisure and hospitality with a 5.82 increase. (Phoenix Business Journal online – 9/5/06)

Bowl games expected to deliver more than \$300 million

Year-end college football festivities have become big business in Arizona -- to the tune of more than \$300 million. The three-game series scheduled for December and January featuring the Insight Bowl, Tostitos Fiesta Bowl and Tostitos BCS National Championship Game, is expected to have an overall economic impact of \$315 million. That's according to a study by the Arizona State University W.P. Carey School of Business. The Insight Bowl will be played Dec. 29 at Sun Devil Stadium, the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl will be on New Year's Day at Cardinals Stadium and the first BCS National Championship is scheduled for Jan. 8 at the Cardinals Stadium. Looking back at their 35-year history, the Fiesta Bowl and related games generated an economic impact of more than \$1.6 billion for the Phoenix area and brought about 1.1 million visitors, according to ASU. The first year, 1971-72, pumped about \$2 million into the economy and attracted 8,000 visitors. (Phoenix Business Journal online – 9/7/06)

Poll: Most Americans Not Afraid to Fly

While much was made of the recent terrorist plot to bring explosives onto planes, only one-third of U.S. adults say their attitude toward flying changed because of it, according to a new Harris Poll. Fifteen percent said the news made them much more anxious about flying, while 18% said it made them somewhat more anxious. Two-thirds (65%) say their attitude remains the same. The latest Harris Poll of 1,000 U.S. adults was conducted by telephone between Aug. 18-21. Only one in 10 U.S. adults said they made changes to their travel plans to avoid flying, while 76% did not make any changes. Seven in 10 say they are anticipating flying the same amount in the next 12 months as they did in the previous 12. (PR Newswire)

Orbitz Launches Mobile Service

Orbitz is launching a Mobile Access service, enabling travelers to check itineraries, flight status and real-time, last-minute hotel availability in 20 U.S. markets from their mobile phone or other wireless device. OrbitzTLC Mobile Access also provides email and phone contact information for Orbitz customer service under the "Contact Us" link. A one-click link puts Orbitz.com customers directly in touch with call agents who are able to offer immediate assistance with both domestic and international booking. The goal is to ensure that Orbitz customer service agents are there when needed most.

(Source: Internet Travel News)

Online Travel Spending up 15 Percent in '06

According to comScore Networks, during the first six months of 2006, total online spending by consumers totaled \$80.8 billion, up more than 20 percent over the same period in 2005. Online non-travel (retail) spending increased by nearly 25 percent to \$46.1 billion, while travel spending reached \$34.7 billion, marking almost a 15 percent gain. Overall, comScore forecasts that total online spending in 2006 will reach approximately \$170 billion. Of that total, comScore estimates that non-travel e-commerce spending will hit approximately \$102 billion in 2006, breaking the \$100 billion threshold for the first time. Approximately \$24 billion is expected to be spent on non-travel during the 2006 holiday season (November 1st - December 31st). (Source: Internet Travel News)

USATODAY.com Partners with Map Network

USATODAY.com, is signing a technology and content partnership with The Map Network (TMN) to provide customizable, interactive destination maps for 28 city guides now live on the site. The partnership will enable the integration of TMN's mapping platform within USATODAY.com content to offer readers a deeper level of engagement around relevant points of interest and to engage users in an interactive, graphically compelling, and user-friendly way. USATODAY.com first worked with TMN to offer expanded destination coverage during Super Bowl XL in Detroit. Detroit events, restaurants, and other points of interest were seamlessly integrated into a customized, consumer-friendly map, providing readers with a unique and engaging way of virtually exploring the city and Super Bowl attractions. The new city guide pages are part of a larger redesign for the Travel section launching in September. TMN currently serves as the Official Map of the Destination Marketing Association International, more than 90 CVBs, and several leading associations. More than 200 events have used TMN's custom map-guides, including more than 25 of the Tradeshow Week Top 200 trade shows, both the Republican and Democratic National Conventions in 2004, the Senior Olympics, the World War II Memorial Dedication, Presidents Cup Marine Corps Marathon, Super Bowl XL and XLI, and a number of leading convention centers, stadiums and hotels. (Source: Internet Travel News)

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